

## Some facts about gulls

- The term “seagull” is used to describe a range of gull species, including herring gulls, black headed gulls and common gulls
- In the wild, gulls eat fresh fish, marine molluscs, crustaceans and earthworms. They are also scavengers and will eat carrion and food waste
- Although gulls are becoming increasingly common in towns and cities, this is because they are leaving their natural environment. As a whole, gull populations are in decline and some species are listed as “at risk”
- Deliberately harming a gull is cruel and also illegal. Gulls are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This makes it an offence to intentionally kill or injure any gull, or to take, damage or destroy an active nest or eggs
- Gulls can only be culled under a General Licence issued by Defra where there is evidence of a risk to public health. Gulls causing a nuisance or damaging property is not grounds for a General Licence

Take part in our gull survey

[www.hartlepool.gov.uk/seagulls](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/seagulls)

## “Gull proofing” your premises

- Remove all available food and make your premises less attractive as a nest site by installing physical deterrents
- Physical deterrents can include wires, netting, bird spikes, plastic owls and fake hawks on wires. **These need to be installed well before the breeding season starts in April**
- Professional falconers can be hired to scare the gulls away with hawks and falcons
- Professional pest control companies specialising in birds offer nest removal, egg oiling and egg replacement, subject to a General Licence



Information for residents, visitors and businesses



## What you can do: businesses

- It is essential that all food businesses properly contain their waste. This is also a legal requirement. Additional waste in black bags must never be left beside or on top of your trade waste bin
- Waste left outside must be in a secure bin and spilled food waste must be quickly cleared up
- Left over food must be quickly cleared up from outdoor seating areas
- Call 01429 523333 or visit [www.hartlepool.gov.uk/recycle](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/recycle) for information about Council trade waste services
- Consider “gull proofing” your premises - see the back page for more information
- **Display our “Please don’t feed the gulls” posters** - download from [www.hartlepool.gov.uk/seagulls](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/seagulls)



## What you can do: at home

- Make sure any bags containing food waste are placed in your green bin and the lid is kept closed
- On green bin collection day, ensure that the lid of your green bin is closed and do not place any black bags beside or on top of the bin. These will not be collected and may be torn open by gulls
- Avoid attracting large birds into your garden. Many people enjoy feeding the birds but avoid putting out large items (e.g. whole slices of bread) that small birds cannot eat as these may attract gulls and vermin
- If you are concerned about gulls nesting on your roof, consider installing preventative measures. A good roofer will be able to advise you on the best solution

## What the Council is doing

- Signage has been installed along the sea fronts and promenades at Seaton and on the Headland
- Stickers have also been put on bins in these areas
- Posters and leaflets requesting people not to feed the gulls have been distributed to local food businesses and visitor attractions

## What you can do: out and about

- When eating outdoors put uneaten food in the bin. Throwing chips, and other unwanted food, on the ground attracts gulls and can make them aggressive. **You could also receive a £75 fine for littering**
- If you are eating in your car, place your rubbish in a nearby bin or take it home. Do not throw rubbish out of the car window
- Do not encourage gulls to take food from your hand as it encourages them to snatch food
- Gull chicks often fall out of the nest when they start learning to fly. If you see one, do not approach it as the parents will be standing guard nearby and may swoop at you to protect their chick.  
[www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/orphanedanimals/youngbirds](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/orphanedanimals/youngbirds)



Look out for the new signage on the sea front